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PRESIDENT AMERICAN NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION
EDITOR AND PUBLISHER THE NUMISMATIST

FARRAN ZERBE
PHILADELPHIA, PA., U. S. A.
MAIL ADDRESS: P. O. Box 876 OFFICE: 236 CHESTNUT ST.

BANK EXPLOITATION EXHIBITIONS AND LECTURE "THE MONEY OF THE WORLD"

June 1,1909.

Hon.Franklin MasVeagh,
Secretray of the Treasury,
Washington,D.C.

Mister Secretary:-

The New York Herald of May 26th.gives prominent space to a column article stating that re-strikes from the original dies of the so called Mormon Coins are to be made and that the Treasury Department will not interfere with the new coinage.

While I question if the newspaper information,that your Department will not interfere with a coinage of this character,is correct, the publicity given the subject, (the Herald's article has been widely copied)is such as to warrant some official statement in reference. I will greatly appreciate being informed as to the disposition of the Treasury Department regarding the present day use of dies from which coins were struck during the period when private coinage was not prohibited.

The Mormon coinage is represented in $2 1/2,$5.,$10.and $20. gold pieces of the same type,dated 1849;and two different types of $5. gold pieces dated 1850 and 1860. It is quite probable that in addition to the dies from which these pieces were struck,that some of the dies from which the private issues of Colorado,~~XXXX~~,California,Oregon and the Carolinas were made,are still in existance. The coins from some of these dies are in close similitude to current government coins. To tolerate the use of any of the Territorial coin dies for striking metal pieces today is not only to invite the use of any other similar dies that may be in existence but to lead to the manufacturing of dies for similar purposes.

I believe your Secret Service Division will readily see a great danger for imposition on the public should tolerance be given to the making of metal pieces bearing a money value or similar to those that have at any time served as coins in our country.

Yours very respectfully,

Farran Zerbe

President,American Numismatic Association
Publisher,The Numismatist.

Subj: **Created Equal, 1e BREIF Edition**
Date: 03/09/2004 11:46:29 AM Central Standard Time
From: jullie@photosearchinc.com
To: ericnumis@aol.com

Dear Mr. Newman,

Jacqui Sutton of our office had recently been in contact with you regarding permission to reproduce an image from your collection in the above text for Longman Publishers. You had sent a query regarding fee negotiation and I apologize that no on had got back to you sooner. I have since taken over this project from Jacqui and am sifting through all of the bits and pieces that invariably crop up during a transition.

Your image appears in this text at 1/8 page size. The standard fee for this type of use in an under 40, 000 print run with North American distribution runs $75.00. If this fee is amenable to you, please feel free to send us an invoice for this amount to my attention at the Photosearch address below.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions. Again, I apologize for the extreme delay in replying and hope to receive your invoice soon.

Sincerely,

--
Jullie Chung
Photosearch, Inc.
127 W. 26th St., Suite 800
New York, NY 10001
(212) 633-2266
fax: (212) 633-2069

Subj: **Your book NUMISMATIC FORGERY**
Date: 06/18/2004 12:38:34 PM Central Daylight Time
From: EricNumis
To: Coinsmith@coinsmith.com

Dear Mr. Larson:
I was delightfully paralyzed after reading your book NUMISMATIC FORGERY and immediately called up your publisher to obtain your Email address. It is a masterpiece on a very sensitive, important and intricate matter. I congratulate you for an epic no one has had the guts to try to write.
You do not know me but Kenneth Bressett and Robert Campbell, etc. do. In the April 1979 Numismatist I wrote an article entitled "Superb Numismatic Forgeries are upon Us." About 1959 I had written "The Secret of the Good Samaritan Shilling" for ANS. Thus I have been involved with exposing some American coin forgery for a long time and have enjoyed numismatic writing just as you have.
May I ask you a few questions?
Can two metals be simultaneously or alternately be electroplated onto a forged or altered piece to produce the proper metallic surface when tested? I am curious about 10% copper and 90% gold or silver for example.
Can inner metal crystallized or flowing structure be tested by nondestructive methods so as to tell whether the coin is cast or struck? A cast billet is customarily put through rollers before planchets are cut from the sheet so some metal flowage or extrusion has already taken place within the resulting planchet before striking flowage occurs.
Can spark erosion pock marks be polished or buffed away?

I look forward to hearing from you at your convenience and hope your book gives you immense satisfaction and recognition.
My mailing address is 6450 Cecil Ave., St. Louis, MO 63105. My telephone number is 314 727 0850. My Fax is 314 727 0820. My Email is above.
Thanks for listening. Eric P. Newman

PS
You may not wish to answer some of these questions as your Zyrus Press friend told me that you left some things out of your book on purpose. (This was clear to me when I read it and I asked about it.)

Subj: **(no subject)**
Date: 06/19/2004 10:47:07 AM Central Daylight Time
From: EricNumis
To: Coinsmith@coinsmith.com

Dear Charles: Your telephone call to me was most enlightening. Thanks.
You asked if you could use my "delightfully paralyzing" comment and as long as you might want to do it I wish to suggest an addition, "a masterpiece for Larsony" or "a masterpiece of Larsony" in some way.
Possibly that terrible pun is old stuff for you but it will be new to most. If we want to be sure people don't miss the pun you could put the word Larsony in quotes unless a capital at the beginning of the word is enough of a hint that you can spell.
Eric

Subj: **Forgery book and your questions to its author**
Date: 06/21/2004 1:23:31 PM Central Daylight Time
From: gaspar@wuchem.wustl.edu
To: EricNumis@aol.com

Dear Eric,

It was nice to see you, if all too briefly, yesterday afternoon.

The forgery book is very interesting, and I look forward to reading it p[age-by-page. It is very kind of you to order me a copy.

Let me briefly address two important questions you raised: I may have inadvertently scrambled these.

1. Can one count on distinguishing struck from cast coins, or do the differences fade with time?
2. Can the determination between case and struck coins be made nondestrucively?

When metal is cast and allowed to cool slowly, the pattern of individual metal grains (the "crystals" of the metal) form in a characteristic manner, the metallic structure often called "dendritic" because a tree-like branching-off pattern of grains is seen.

When cast metal is distorted by being rolled into strips for production of planchets, as has been practiced for hundreds of years, or simply distorted by a cast blank being struck with dies, the dendritic pattern is distorted, the individual metal grains geing elongated by flow of the metal under rolling, or, to a lesser extent, by simple striking.

The grain structure distorted by mechanical work is characteristic of struck coins. That distortion can be removed to some extent by heating (annealing) but the original dendritic structure cannot be recovered without quite severe heating. Ancient and medieval coins usually show quite clearly the distortions of their metallic grain structure due to the mechancal work they have endured. I would be happy to prepare photocopies, or loan you the original publications of some representative studies that take advantage of the distorted microstructure to deduce a sequence of manufacturing operations.

The bottom line is that one can generally distinguish cast from struck coins with a high degree of certainty _if one can observe the microstructure of the metal of the coin._ That is a big if, because generally that microstructure is observed through destructive techniques, typically, polishing and then etching a smsll (say 1/2 mm) spot on the coin.

The answer to your second question is that techniques are know that should allow the determination to be made nondestructively, but not by routine methods. 25 years ago at the 1979 ANA Educational Forum at the St. Louis ANA summer meeting I talked about one possible nondestructive method, acoustical holography. Since this uses ultrasonic radiation, it can penetrate below the surface of a metal and thus not require surface preparation, for spots where the surface is reasonably flat. Mary Striegel was in contact with an equipment manufacturer named Sonoscan that was interested in trying their technique on coins, but that never came to fruition - my recollection was that they wanted a lot of money. I shall email Mary to ask whether she knows about any recent progress.

Do you regard the problem of distinguishing cast from stuck coins to be a serious contemporary problem? If so, then the attention to efforts to make this diagnosis nondestructively should be actively revived.

Peter

Subj: **Re: Numismatic Forgery**
Date: 06/23/2004 10:38:41 AM Central Daylight Time
From: kbressett@pcisys.net
To: EricNumis@aol.com

Dear Eric,

I am happy to see that you have Larsony on your mind and in your heart. You will now fit right in with all the others in this incredible hobby.

I have not yet read the new book. The publisher did not send me a printed copy. But I did read the manuscript two years ago, and I was the one who got the publisher to consider publishing it. I do not think it offers any incentives for forgers to try new techniques. Hoffman apparently was a master at his trade. I am still puzzled about the 1959 Lincoln cent he is reputed to have made.

I will be sure to meet and greet Anne Bentley. I do not know her. My last contact with the MHS was around 1958, when I photographed many of their Colonial pieces. I am looking forward to spending the next two weeks at the Seminar. I will be teaching Early American Money with young John Kraljevich; American Literature with Charles Davis; and taking the course on Ancient Greek Coins for my own edification.

All best to you and Evelyn. We will be thinking of you throughout the Seminar, and especially on July 4, my favorite of all holidays.

Ken

At 09:24 PM 6/22/2004 -0400, you wrote:

> Dear Ken: On the cover of the book by Charles W. Larson entitled NUMISMATIC FORGERY I see that you said nice things about it. I called up the publisher to get a copy and he told me that some things were omitted by Larson in order not to make it too easy for forgers. I obtained a copy and immediately read it from cover to cover. I wrote Larson to tell him that it was "delightfully paralyzing" and then I thought up the best pun in my career: I told him that it was a "masterpiece of Larsony." Being a jail guard for Mark Hoffman is research beyond the call of duty.
> For the summer ANA education program Anne Bentley, archivist of the Mass. Hist. Soc., is helping Mudd teach museum operations and she says that she is going to "coin camp." She is a wonderful person and you may know her. In any event be sure to greet her and enjoy her company.
> I know your teaching gives you great satisfaction so keep doing it. Best to Bert. Eric

Kenneth Bressett
P.O. Box 60145
Colorado Springs, CO 80960

Subj: **Numismatic Forgery**
Date: 06/26/2004 4:55:47 PM Central Daylight Time
From: EricNumis
To: Coinsmith@coinsmith.com

Dear Charles:
I have searched my files and am pleased to report that I have found extra copies of:
Lessons in Modern Day Counterfeiting (Numismatist Nov. 1967),
Superb Numismatic Forgeries are upon us (Numismatist Apr.1979),
The Fantastic 1804 Dollar (1962), &
American Circulation of English and Bungtown Halfpence (1976).

Two are writer's offprints. One is a complete book. One is a photocopy. These are the major pieces I have written on coin counterfeiting in general. I have also written on specific forgeries of specific early American coins.
I also have copies for you of my Mormon restrike material which I shared with the archivist at the Church.
I do not have your mailing address and am waiting for it.
I look forward to receiving the reproductions you produced of the Mormon pieces.
I have ordered two more copies of your book to give to friends and the distributor told me he is out of them and reordering.
My best. Eric.

Subj: **Re: Numismatic Forgery**
Date: 06/26/2004 5:39:36 PM Central Daylight Time
From: coinsmith@coinsmith.com
To: EricNumis@aol.com

Hello Eric, very good to hear from you!

I'm very grateful you were able to locate the articles you mention, and am looking forward to seeing them. Sorry I haven't gotten your package out yet, but I should be able to get it in the mail by Monday. In addition to the Mormon coins I'm including one of my Athenian tetradrachms (these are the lower relief variety of archaic, as differentiated from the more common ultra-high relief), a Persian siglos, and a uniface strike of my Alexander tetradrachm (I haven't finished the reverse die yet). All three of these coins are illustrated in my book. I hope you enjoy them!

Oh, my mailing address is:
Charles Larson
943 South 100 East
Orem, UT 84058

I should mention that I was most intrigued by the background you gave about the history of nickel-shell electroplate diemaking. I had assumed that Hofmann had come up with it on his own by simple reasoning based on knowledge of how electrotype replicas are made for museums (and perhaps he did, independently) -- but it is fascinating to learn that knkowledge of the process dates back at least to the 1960s. I'd love to learn more about the recorded history of this. This topic appears to be virtually unknown or unheard of by most numistmatists, as well as by the Secret Service.

I'm thankful to you also for ordering copies of my book for your friends. I was actually being facitious when I suggested readers should buy extra copies (p.168), so it pleases me very much that anyone would actually do so.

Best,
Chuck

> ----- Original Message -----
> **From:** EricNumis@aol.com
> **To:** Coinsmith@coinsmith.com
> **Sent:** Saturday, June 26, 2004 3:55 PM
> **Subject:** Numismatic Forgery

Dear Charles:
I have searched my files and am pleased to report that I have found extra copies of:
Lessons in Modern Day Counterfeiting (Numismatist Nov. 1967),
Superb Numismatic Forgeries are upon us (Numismatist Apr..1979),
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I do not have your mailing address and am waiting for it..
I look forward to receiving the reproductions you produced of the Mormon pieces.
I have ordered two more copies of your book to give to friends and the distributor told me he is out of them and reordering.
My best. Eric.

Subj: **Larsony**
Date: 07/02/2004 3:45:07 PM Central Daylight Time
From: EricNumis
To: Coinsmith@coinsmith.com

Dear Chuck:
Your package arrived and I am amazed at your superb workmanship. I am not sure whether the gold plating is done before the striking or afterward but assume it was afterward. I am glad you put your full name on the edge when there was space for it. Your pieces gave me the idea that I could put up a display of repros and forgeries in our museum. We already have and will repeat a display of counterfeits and alterations. Our Ben Franklin display will feature his efforts to make counterfeiters select other money to counterfeit rather than those he printed.
I was surprised to find that the text on the $10 only said PURE GOLD and not GSLCPG. The ancient forgeries I may tie onto your book to make it a really illustrated book.
I have been delayed in sending the articles, etc. to you as our housekeeper did not bring them to the post office as yet. They will be sent pronto.
Thank you so much for the gift. Thrive. Eric

Subj: **Re: Larsony**
Date: 07/03/2004 12:29:42 AM Central Daylight Time
From: coinsmith@coinsmith.com
To: EricNumis@aol.com

Good evening, Eric,

I can't tell you how pleased I am that you have such kind things to say of my replicas. I'm very glad that you enjoy them!

You are correct; the gold coins were plated (using Mark Hofmann's equipment!) after striking. (I had tried plating the planchet first & then striking, but always had a bit of an outline of the base metal showing wherever a device, letter, or rim joined the field after striking a pre-plated planchet.)

The edge lettering on the coins was applied by the homemade Castaing machine illustrated in my book on p.114, using the method for incuse edge lettering just as the book describes. As you may surmise, I did not write about anything that I hadn't attempted to master myself, or at least explore thoroughly. Also, you may have already noticed, but the uniface Alexander tetradrachm I sent is the one shown at the lower left of the four coin group of struck examples on p.52. (The Athenian tetradrachm is probably also in one of the photographs, but I sure couldn't say for certain which.)

The museum display you mention sounds like it will be fascinating. Please try to send me a photo or two of it, if you can. And I'm certainly looking forward to receiving the articles &c that you've located. It sounds like I'll have some great reading to do when they arrive!

I'll be seeing Bob Campbell later on this month at our club meeting; can't wait to tell him I had the opportunity to meet you.

Best,
Chuck

----- Original Message -----
From: EricNumis@aol.com
To: Coinsmith@coinsmith.com
Sent: Friday, July 02, 2004 2:45 PM
Subject: Larsony

Dear Chuck:
Your package arrived and I am amazed at your superb workmanship. I am not sure whether the gold plating is done before the striking or afterward but assume it was afterward. I am glad you put your full name on the edge when there was space for it. Your pieces gave me the idea that I could put up a display of repros

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Thank you so much for the gift. Thrive. Eric

Subj: **Re: (no subject)**
Date: 08/16/2004 7:04:17 PM Central Daylight Time
From: coinsmith@coinsmith.com
To: EricNumis@aol.com

Hello my friend, it is very good to hear from you!

I had a wonderful time reading through the book and articles you sent me -- didn't I write back? I'm sorry if I didn't, because they are indeed very helpful. Your article Superb Numismatic Forgeries are Upon Us was especially amazing; it was almost like a precursor to my own later research and writing. It will be difficult to convince anyone that I hadn't seen or been aware of it prior to writing Numismatic Forgery, but it's the truth! (Perhaps it's true what they say about "great minds...etc. etc.) Anyway, marvelous stuff. Thank you so much for sharing with me.

I'm leaving for Pittsburg tomorrow morning for the ANA Convention and I'll be speaking on Wednesday at the Numismatic Theatre on "Numismatic Forgery, Mark Hofmann, and me." Don't let it out, but I will be revealing the fruits of my research on duplicating his striking of the 1959 Wheatback cent during my talk, and presenting the ANA Museun curator, Doug Mudd, with my nickle die shells and strike. Should be very interesting (I hope). --And the conclusion is: yes, it does work!

I've read Mr. Worrall's book and have to agree with your evaluation, though he did appear to go the extra mile and secure a great many insightful interviews (mine included). Altogether, I think he gives a fairly accurate picture not only of the man and his crimes, but of his environment. I thought this was quite rare for a person not from Utah, which is quite an uncommon culture in many ways.

By the way, I've updated my website coinsmith@coinsmith.com and included your very kind comments about my book. That means a great deal to me.

Best,
Chuck

----- Original Message -----
From: EricNumis@aol.com
To: Coinsmith@coinsmith.com
Sent: Monday, August 16, 2004 5:08 PM
Subject: (no subject)

Dear Larceny:
I just obtained and read in full THE POET AND THE MURDERER in which you were mentioned. This seems to be a well written rehash of mostly prior published material. I wondered what you thought about it.
I had not heard from you as to the material I sent you and wondered whether it

was any help to you.
I think I shall put a display in my museum on forgeries and replicas to add to my counterfeit and alteration exhibits. I shall include yours which are superb.
My kind regards. Eric

Kagin p 368-369

Fakes of Mormon Coins

2.50 5.00 (1849) 5.00 (1850) 5.00 (1860)
$10 (1849) $20 (1849)

Kagin p 368-369

Some uniface Some gilded Some with wire or strings.

All made of copper and lead

none in gold or silver

"probably made" during 50th anniversary 1898

1849 + 50 = 1899

~~Attempt to stop~~

~~Mormon~~ Mormons

~~see Roger Burdette?~~

~~one~~ Σ mail

not true

See letter of Farran Zerbe in 1909

Sent by Roger Burdette

Zyrus Press
Charles M. Larson

Fax 800 215 9694

Please send a copy of your book

NUMISMATIC FORGERY

to

ERIC P. NEWMAN
6450 CECIL AVE
St. LOUIS MO 63105

Charge $24.70 to Mastercard

5490 3510 3843 8902

thank you

Eric P. Newman